

My Lord

[Page 1]

This poem was written by Abuubakar Daabo better known as Arfaq Sitookoto.

Oh, My Lord, don't leave me by myself.

Protect me when Satan wants to harm me,

for my body and my soul are in Your hands.

Don't turn your back on me. Don't forsake me, and don't let me go.

Wrap me in Your great garment of protection, oh My Creator!

Make sure I'm not ashamed on Judgment Day!

Pour the flames of hellfire on my great detractors.

Pour the flames of hellfire day and night on those who hate me.

Let them not have peace of mind in their lifetime; may they not be at peace.

May none of them be happy, even if they are better than me.

I implore You to bring me happiness and to all my admirers, here and on Judgment Day,

and cover us with Your protection from hellfire.

Grant us all longevity with great health,

and protect my righteous deeds and shield them.

[Page 2]

I seek refuge in You from the pain of the great day, the day of the great gathering,

the day when the eyes of nonbelievers will see no light,

the day when the mother will say to her child, "I am not your mother!"

for she will be terrified by the power of the flames of hellfire,

the day when members of the same family will flee as if in a whirlwind,

the day when the fire will smolder under the ashes and spurt out embers

that will pour out and strike down those who had refused to perform righteous deeds!

It is important to perform righteous deeds in life to escape this atrocity,
righteous deeds that one can rely on to be saved on that day.

All people will tremble with fear and worry about their own fate.

Thus, the sun will descend to one meter above people.

The fate of each person will depend on the deeds s/he has done in life.

The rewards for righteous deeds for some won't even reach above their ankles,

whereas the rewards for the righteous deeds of others will reach above their ankles.

[Page 3]

The righteous deeds of some will be rewarded up to the height of their breasts,

whereas the righteous deeds of others will be rewarded even higher.

Some will behave like a watchful crocodile

that one could see submerging and sticking out its head to blow foamy water.

Everyone will begin to shout aloud: "Oh Our Father

Adam! Tell us that you can implore God's forgiveness on our behalf?"

He will advise them: "Go to the Prophet Noah,

because I myself have worries that concern me"!

So, everyone will go to Noah and says to him: "Noah, Our Father!

Tell us that it is you who will implore for divine forgiveness on our behalf!

Noah will tell them that me too

I have committed a sin that worries me at this moment.

Everyone will agree to say: "Let's go to

the Prophet Moses too to see if he can save us."

[Page 4]

Moses will also tell them: "I committed a sin.

Leave me alone because I have my own problems that concern me.

Then, everyone will cry out and say: "Oh Friend of God [Abraham]!"

But he won't answer them.

The child of the woman Batula,¹ the Prophet Jesus, will not answer either. Everyone else
will return home, but he will not be able to implore divine forgiveness on their behalf.

Then everyone will say: "Oh Prophet of God,

Muhammad! Tell us that it is you who will save us!

Thus, the best among people [Muhammad] will kneel

and bow down to implore God.

Thus, God will send the Angel Gabriel, and the latter will say to him: "Arise [Muhammad]! Great
intercessor, beg God's forgiveness for each one of us, in your name!

[Oh God] Make sure that I am among the people whose eyes will be enlightened there,
and among those who will not worry about the deeds they committed in life.

[Page 5]

Place me in the big barge during the crossing of the bridge [of Sirat].² Grant me

a crossing faster than lightning that lights up the sky furtively and then disappears.

Cover me with Your wisdom and Your discretion and protect me.

Grant the same to my mother and my father for the honor of the Prophet.

Apart from that, grant Your mercy and forgiveness

¹ Here the poet uses the title *Al-Batul* to refer to *Mary*, the mother of *Jesus*. In Islam, the title *Al-Batul* is given to women who have separated themselves from men because they are close to Allah. The title is also used to refer to *Fatima*, the daughter of the *Prophet Muhammad*.

² In Islam, *al-Sirat* is a bridge which is as thin as a hair that everyone must cross before entering paradise. It is said that crossing the bridge is difficult for sinners, and some might fall into the pit of hell located under the bridge.

to the Prophet Muhammad before any other individual on earth.

We can consider someone a good person here in this life,

but on Judgment Day, we'll find him at the bottom of the ladder!

We can consider someone a less than nothing here in this life,

but on Judgment Day, we will find him above everybody!

You Faasiki, I see you boasting about your knowledge. Come learn!

No matter your boasting, if you do not seek knowledge, you will not be pardoned.

You the charlatan, I noticed you spend nights reciting litanies,

and as soon as you finish your litanies, you think you are exempt from everything!

[Page 6]

Then, you begin to open the doors of the big houses of perdition

where you enter only in search of the pleasures of life.

Faa Foodee,³ you the great Friday preacher, you have become arrogant!

After the mosque, it is you who transgresses your own sermons!

You the expert! Don't you know that even if you have knowledge,

if you do not practice what you preach, you will not be pardoned.

There is no worse misfortune than ignorance!

The devotion of the ignorant leads nowhere.

The ignorant person is silent and loves to live in contention and pride.

He loves to say that he hasn't reached his best yet!

He says to himself that a day of joy can be known from the morning,

and that one can feel a pleasant night by the beauty of the afternoon!

Please dear woman, respect your husband,

³ *Faa Foodee* can be a name, but here it is a generic name for anyone who claims to be knowledgeable due to arrogance.

and do not violate his instructions!

[Page 7]

The day you die, when your body is wrapped up in a burial garment and laid on the ground
in front of your grave, it is your husband who will put you under the ground.

When Judgment Day also comes, after the mandatory prayer,
your husband will be asked to give an account of your acts.

If you happen to be a woman who filled her husband with joy,
the women of paradise will envy your righteous deeds.

If you happen to be a wife who didn't respect her husband,
then your tongue will be burned with a blazing fire.

You too, man, you must not mistreat your wife!⁴

You must not mistreat one woman at the expense of another.

If this one is here for you, know that the other one is also there for you.

You must not ignore her by refusing to entrust her with tasks.

The beauty and radiant face of one of them
must not make you forget the recommendations of Your Creator on this subject!

[Page 8]

There will be two great mountains of stones on Judgment Day.

If you are not righteous, these are the two mountains that will shake you!

What happens to us? I see when a single man dies
that the imam and the audience agree to speak well [of the deceased].

[But] when an unmarried woman dies and her body is laid out for burial prayer,
when we ask to start the funeral prayer, everyone starts mumbling.

⁴ Here the author talks about unjust men in polygamous marriages.

Know this! A woman who refuses to marry without valid reasons, if she dies,
she will not benefit from divine forgiveness. She will be thrown into the fire of hell.
Even the unmarried women of the Prophet's family who refuse to marry,
if they die, the Prophet will not intervene on their behalf.
Anyone whose lips are red because of the gossip here in this life,
on Judgment Day, hellfire will blacken their lips!

[Page 9]

Witchcraft is not eating human flesh.⁵

Eating human flesh is saying bad things about people behind their backs!
Sticking out your tongue, winking and patting your neighbor in sight of someone,
as well as saying, "Here's the guy!", and continually murmuring about someone,
whoever persists in slandering people in this way in the world, let him continue!
On Judgment Day, he will go into the middle of the hellfire!
Or talking about someone's sunken eyes without knowing the cause.
First, this judgment is akin to the sin of usury.

Is having a big belly a sign of worshipping God?

On Judgment Day, you will be ashamed because of your turpitudes!
My handsome young man, what prevents you from saying your five obligatory prayers?
Do you believe yourself exempt from the evaluation of the Almighty?
If you don't pray, even if you perform many righteous deeds,
on Judgment Day you will not receive kisses from the women of paradise!

⁵ In the Mandinka culture, many believe that there are sorcerers capable of mystically killing people to eat their flesh later. The poet rejects this idea in these verses.

[Page 10]

I asked the Prophet Muhammad about this topic,

may God grant him His blessings and His mercy.

[Which is more serious between] killing, committing adultery, usury,

lying, gambling, drinking alcohol,

eating pork, eating a dead animal, or smoking tobacco?

Father⁶ answered me: "The refusal to say the prayers is more serious than all these sins!"

He was also asked a question about those who have five wives.

He replied: "The refusal to pray is more serious than having five wives!"

That is because refusing to perform obligatory prayers is a great sin,

for he who refuses to perform obligatory prayers is treated as a nonbeliever.

Whoever neglects the hours of obligatory prayers up to ten times,

a punishment repeated fifteen times is reserved for him.

Six punishments during his life, three more punishments will be inflicted on him

at the time of his death as well as three others when he is underground,

[Page 11]

and three more punishments will be given to him when everyone is present

on Judgment Day. These punishments are the ones that will resuscitate you.

I swear that refusing to pray is a great sin!

The affairs of the one who refuses to pray are of no interest to the Prophet Muhammad.

If someone tells you gossip about another person,

ask him if he is going to tell you his own wickedness?

You fake man, did you forget to talk about your sins? Today [on this Judgment Day], you

⁶ Prophet Muhammad.

can't ignore your sins. You will account for all your sins!

Know that he on whom divine punishments will fall

will not have time to see the punishments of others, even less to recount them.

Your acts of yesterday, you see someone reproducing the same acts today;

you pretend to forget yours, and you start recounting the bad deeds of the latter!

It is because you don't really know anything about the day when the secrets will be examined,

the day when all secrets will be revealed, the day yours will be exposed!

[Page 12]

If you see a man claiming to be a saint because he wears

a turban around his head, know that this does not make him an elect of God!

He pretends he doesn't look young women in the eye,

and behaves like a saint who works miracles!

Yet, if a woman comes to him and calls him loudly,

you can see him sucking on Satan's breasts!

He presents in public to be someone who doesn't spend much time on a mat

to sleep at night [because of the nightly prayers], and he recounts his mystical prowess!

[But in reality], if you walk past his room in the middle of the night,

you can hear him snoring until he's drooling!

When he wakes up, he looks like he hasn't slept at all [because of the prayers]!

He pulls out a long rosary and begins to make invocations aloud!

You will see him later walking confidently on the side of the road,

with his long zaytun rosary⁷ which he wears with pride!

⁷ Rosary made of Moroccan olive wood.

[Page 13]

If the women see him, he changes his path to pretend to avoid them!

The fate of this man and that of the women are linked by worldly pleasures.

If someone reproaches him, he gets very angry. It even looks like he will bring out a big machete

[to attack his critics] if he is not dissuaded!

He behaves as if he was the one who created the clouds in the sky,

as if it was he who had brought the great stars above our heads!

[But in reality], even if we hadn't dissuaded him,

he won't be able to do any miracles that people haven't already seen!

A pretend scavenger cannot be a real scavenger to the point of flying!

A man disguised as a lion is not comparable to a real lion!

A pretend saint, even if he puts on big wings,

do not fear him, take him as one who has sins.

The pretend saint, even if he walked on the river,

do not fear him, take him like a crocodile!

He who claims to be a saint, even if he works miracles,

consider it a miracle of a nonbeliever.

[Page 14]

Lies are dark things for human beings.

Some have made it a source of fame and knowledge.

Lies and pride are so great that they cannot live together!

The monitor lizard and the fish do not compare when it comes to walking!

If you see yourself in the seventh heaven in a dream,

or you divulge [alleged] secret and surprising information,

the day your lies will be exposed like a river or a stream [that everybody can see],

you charlatan, you will realize that Satan is misleading you!

You charlatan, your knowledge leads you to perdition!

What you are looking for, if you don't ask for it, you won't find it.

There is a part of the bush where the child can be sent alone to collect firewood.

But if a dragon⁸ is down there, not everyone can see it.

Some adults will pass it and continue their way into the bush

looking for firewood, but they will not see it.

[Page 15]

If you are looking for knowledge and spiritual light, you must recite

the names of God: Ḥayun [The Living One] and Qayūm [The Source]. Don't stop them!

You can recite them at the end of the morning and in the evening, dear Maroŋ!

Treat this great recommendation as your new last name!

This poem ends here. I ask forgiveness

from all those who are offended by it, and who feel directly targeted!

In reality, I didn't target anyone because it is just a sermon! Those who will look at me with

Contempt are certainly those whose bad deeds are dealt with in this poem!

O My Creator! Let us give thanks to His Great Prophet,

his offspring, and his companions. Blessings to all creatures!

⁸ The author uses here the word *Ninkinanka* which, in Mandinka, refers to a winged serpent with horns, and who has the ability to make itself invisible to the uninitiated. It is the equivalent of a dragon in Mandinka mythology.

The end of this sermon poem for Muslim men and women. May the grace of God be upon him who composed it. Amen! Glory to your Lord, the Lord of Majesty. Peace be upon His messengers. Praise be to God, Lord of the Universes. The end.